

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8798

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EMO. 11652: NA

TAGS: EAID, ELAB, TD

SUBJECT: AIFLD PROGRAM REGIONAL GUIDELINES 1976-1977

REF: STATE 22496

1. SINCE THE GOTT EXPELLED THE AIFLD REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE CARIBBEAN IN SEPTEMBER 1972, THERE HAVE BEEN NO DIRECT EDUCATIONAL OR SOCIAL AIFLD ACTIVITIES IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO. MEMBERS OF TRINIDAD'S UNIONS HAVE, HOWEVER, CONTINUED TO PARTICIPATE IN REGIONAL AIFLD PROGRAMS WHICH HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN BARBADOS AND IN THE UNITED STATES. THESE PROGRAMS, WHICH ARE INCLUDED IN THE CARIBBEAN REGIONAL PROGRAM COSTS OF THE AIFLD BUDGET, ARE THE ONLY PARTS OF THE REGIONAL LABOR PLAN FOR 1976-1977 OF DIRECT RELEVANCE TO TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO.

2. THE TRAINING WHICH TRINIDADIAN UNIONISTS HAVE RECEIVED AT FRONT ROYAL, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY AND IN OTHER AIFLD PROGRAMS OUTSIDE TRINIDAD IN THE PAST HAS BEEN EFFECTIVE AND HIGHLY APPRECIATED BY THE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO LABOR MOVEMENT. IN SPITE OF THE ATTITUDE OF THE GOVERNMENT TOWARD AIFLD, THESE PROGRAMS HAVE NOT CREATED PROBLEMS FOR THE EMBASSY OR THE USG WITH THE TRINIDAD & TOBAGO GOVERNMENT.

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MSOT OF THE GRADUATES OF SUCH AIFLD TRAINING ARE NOW

DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN LABOR-RELATED ACTIVITIES IN TRINIDAD, MAY IN KEY POSITIONS SUCH AS JUDGES ON THE INDUSTRIAL COURT. THE EMBASSY WHOLEHEARTEDLY ENDORSES THE CONTINUATION OF THESE PROGRAMS AND THE CONTINUED PARTICIPATION OF TRINIDADIANS IN THEM.

3. WHILE AIFLD'S POSITION IN TRINIDAD IS NOT, IN THE EMBASSY'S OPINION, A PARTICULARLY HAPPY ONE, THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT THE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO LABOR CONGRESS MAY ASK FOR AIFLD ASSISTANCE ON SOME FUTURE SOCIAL PROJECTS AND THAT THE GOTT MAY NOT VETO SUCH ASSISTANCE. BECAUSE OF PAST UNHAPPINESS AND THE POLITICAL RAMIFICATIONS OF AIFLD INVOLVEMENT IN TRINIDAD, HOWEVER, THE EVENTUAL RESUMPTION OF AIFLD ACTIVITIES HERE WILL HAVE TO BE HANDLED DELICATELY AND WITH THE FULL KNOWLEDGE AND PARTICIPATION OF THE EMBASSY.

4. CONSEQUENTLY, WE REQUEST THAT THE FOLLOWING CONDITION BE INCLUDED IN THE 1976/1977 CONTRACT: "DURING THE EFFECTIVE PERIOD OF THIS CONTRACT, AIFLD SHALL NOT CONDUCT ANY LABOR EDUCATION COURSES AND/OR ACTIVITIES IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO WITHOUT THE EXPRESSED WRITTEN APPROVAL OF THE U.S. EMBASSY, PORT OF SPAIN."

5. THE EMBASSY LABOR OFFICER AND THE AIFLD CARIBBEAN REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE HAVE DISCUSSED THE SITUATION AND THE SENSITIVITIES IN TRINIDAD THOROUGHLY AND HAVE REACHED AGREEMENT ON POSSIBLE FUTURE COURSES OF ACTION WHICH WILL SATISFY BOTH THE EMBASSY AND AIFLD'S REQUIREMENTS.

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